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they brought me towels of glistening linen, bordered with red cotton and shining lace, such as an American woman will hardly trouble herself to make for body linen. Exquisite neatness, entire comfort, and lavish use of ornament of the best kind—what more do we include in the term refinement?

Until the broad linens and heavy cottons we want are furnished, the best substitute for an inexpensive curtain will be unbleached sheeting, dyed to order. Unbleached of the heaviest make, which has lost none of its strength by bleaching, can be dyed in available colors at any good establishment at a cost of from ten to fifteen cents a yard, and will prove more satisfactory than anything yet recommended. With cotton colored indigo, madder red and brown, yellow, and light ingrain blue, sufficiently good effects can be produced by combinations, embroideries, and appliques. A pair of unbleached curtains, sprigged in red and blue chain-stitch, imitating tambour work, is rapidly and cheaply made, and with a deep red border to one and deep blue for the other they look bright and pretty. Much better will be the dull blue cotton curtains with cross-bands of lighter blue, worked in clusters of bluish berries in light and dark shades with touches of red, set on with dark red bars and bold cross-stitching of deep orange. Embroidery relieves another blue curtain with stars of brownish yellow rudbeckia, two blossoms together with leaf and short stem in sprigs at wide distances, with scrolls of the same flower on the heading of dull wine-color.

SHIRLEY DARE.

CONVENTIONAL TREATMENT IN DESIGN.

[See illustrations in the supplement.]

No plant is better known in England than the beautiful Hawthorn, Whitethorn, or May. It is much used for hedgerows, for which, on account of its strength, closeness of growth, and spiny character, it is well adapted. Mr. F. E. Hulme, in a paper on the adaptability of British plants to the purposes of design, says of the hawthorn:

"The leaves of the plant are exceedingly varied in form, affording a great choice for the selection of the ornamentist; some being very simple in character, while others are deeply cut, and very rich and beautiful in outline. A permanent variety may be occasionally met with, in which the leaves, instead of being of the ordinary deep and bluish-green, are in addition irregularly blotched with varying and intermingling tones of yellow. The flowers also of the hawthorn are subject to considerable variation in color; the typical state is a pure milky-white; but owing to the nature of the soil in which the plant is found, the blossoms may occasionally be seen varying from a pale pink to almost crimson. The berries, also, though generally of a deep crimson color, are sometimes of an intensely golden yellow."

The hawthorn is one of the favorite plants of the ornamentist, occurring very commonly in English works of the Middle Ages. Mr. Hulme cites its occurrence in a finial in the Lady Chapel, Exeter; as a stone-diaper alternating with oak, at Lincoln; in two fine spandrels, and a beautiful capital, very full and rich in its wreathing, in the Chapter-house, Southwell; and in the cathedrals at Ely, Wells, and Winchester. He says: "Wherever met with in ornamental art, the leaves and berries are the parts selected; to the best of our knowledge the flowers have never, in any instance, been introduced, no doubt from the fact of the minuteness and delicacy of each individual blossom, and its habit of growing in clusters, which, though extremely beautiful in nature, are, from their intricacy in detail, unsuited to the purposes of the ornamentist."

Notwithstanding this opinion, it will be seen by the illustrations, in the supplement pages, of the conventional treatment of the hawthorn—for which we are indebted to *The Journal of Decorative Art*, published in Manchester, England—that the flowers may be intro-

duced with good effect. The illustrations are expressly designed to convey a lesson on conventionalism. Owen Jones, in his "Grammar of Ornament," speaking on the conventionality of natural forms, says: "Flowers or other natural objects should not be used as ornaments, but conventional representations, founded upon them, sufficiently suggestive to convey the intended image to the mind, without destroying the unity of the object they are employed to decorate." The object in these designs, apart from their usefulness for panel decoration, is to illustrate what is meant by this conventionalizing of natural forms. Chambers's Encyclopædia explains "conventional" as "that which is in accordance, not with the absolute principles of beauty in form and color, but with the opinions and sentiments in reference to forms and colors which chance to prevail at a particular time, in a particular country, or social class." Our contemporary is not satisfied with the limits of this definition, and in the following lucid sentences explains what it understands the word to mean when applied to decoration:

"No. 1 is the natural type or fac-simile of the hawthorn leaf, stem, and flower as it grows in our hedgerows. No. 2 is an upright panel showing an extremely conventional adaptation of the leaf, stem, and berry of

ing ornament, we have altered and twisted into forms not seen in nature, but nevertheless pleasing and useful. It will be observed also that although not following the natural type it has a principle of growth and movement in its construction, and the eye naturally follows this growth from its start in the base to the top of the spiral stem, this again contrasting with the straight upright stem, making each more pleasing (the contrast of straight lines with curves is always so), the whole forming a strictly conventional ornament. No. 3 is another arrangement on a horizontal panel based upon a geometrical form, and in this example we see another condition of conventionalism in its symmetrical arrangement, the one half of the design being the exact counterpart of the other. This is very rarely the case in natural forms. Many kinds of ferns approach the nearest, inasmuch as the fronds when fully grown are beautifully symmetrical, but with a symmetry peculiarly their own, and not such as is displayed in our example. If we examine a frond of fern we shall find that the lobes of the fronds (if we may use the term) on the one side are not exactly opposite those on the other, but occupy a place on the one side opposite the space left between two lobes on the other side. Many other plants have the same habit, while others (notably the

dwarf palms) will have as many as three and four or more leaves springing from the same point. Now to make each leaf exactly alike in form, and place them in exactly the same positions on each side of a central or other stem, may be termed symmetrical conventionalism, whether it be a natural leaf or otherwise. If we take any number of leaves from among the thousands borne by any tree we shall not find two of them exactly alike; they bear a general resemblance in form, sufficiently so to tell us to what tree or species they belong, but there the likeness ends, each one differs from another in some marked respect. So that if we simply use the natural leaf and double it in its exact form, placing it symmetrically, we thereby conventionalize it. No. 4 on our sheet, while still retaining the three berries and three-lobed leaves, more nearly approaches the natural type of the hawthorn, inasmuch as the ends of the lobes are more notched or serrated. Springing out of the vase is a conventional rose formed of eight large petals and eight small ones arranged round the centre disk. No. 5 is still another conventional arrangement of the hawthorn designed as a tile decoration. The leaves and berries are symmetrically placed, are equal-sided, and lend themselves admirably to the square of the tile. The four leaves in the centre, when looked at for a moment, lose their leaf form in some measure, and the black background appears as a cross. In the example of panel decoration (No. 6) we have the nearest approach to its natural type.

The leaves are five-lobed as in the natural leaf, and the flowers are some with four and some with five petals. The arrangement of stem and leaves, while conventionalized to a certain extent, is of a strongly representative character, and cannot be mistaken for any other than the hawthorn. This example may be classed as a slightly conventionalized rendering of it, symmetrically arranged. We now come to No. 7, which example may be classed as a strictly conventionalized geometrical rendering of the simple daisy. It is stiff and formal, but not unpleasing on that account. There is no pretence of naturalism—it is in itself complete as a tile, but as a decoration requires to be multiplied and seen in the mass to judge accurately of its suitability for the purpose for which it is designed when in use. It is placed here as a contrast to the semi-natural forms of the other examples. From what has been said we see that, so far as ornamental forms are concerned, conventionalism simply means the adaptation and alteration of natural forms for the purposes of decorative design, while at the same time retaining in the ornamental form sufficient of the natural form to indicate the source from which it springs." This liberal definition would certainly bring within its scope a very varied range of motives.



THIRTEENTH CENTURY ROLLING FIRE-BOX.

the hawthorn. For the purpose of our ornament it will be seen that we have arranged the leaf and berries on a spiral stem which winds round a centre one. Now we know that this arrangement is not a natural one; we see that at a glance. The berries also are arranged in threes, but in a natural state they are in clusters. Three berries or three leaves so placed form in themselves a pleasing and symmetrical outline and form. Similarly we form the leaves with three lobes instead of five, as in the natural leaf. These we have drawn thus because it is simple, answers our purpose, and is altogether more pleasing in form than four would be. It is a singular fact that odd numbers are generally more pleasing in this respect than even ones. Now our ornament, while not following the natural type, does show to those acquainted with the leaf that it is based upon the hawthorn leaf, and although the berries may be, strictly speaking, somewhat more like the cherry than the hawthorn fruit, yet, taken in conjunction with the form of leaf, no mistake could be made; it is not, in fact, a representation of the hawthorn either in leaf, berry, or order of growth, and yet is sufficiently near for us to say that it is a conventional rendering of that tree, which, for the purpose of forming a pleas-